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POLICY RATIONALE

At Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School, we recognise that learning happens in varying contexts, both inside classrooms and beyond. Learning occurs during co-curricular sport, on a Round Square exchange or conference, in a School production, in lessons and at home. Indeed, 'Home Learning' is a very important aspect of the learning journey that each student travels while at school. Traditionally 'Home Learning' has been thought of as set homework and study that students complete during the year.

In order to maximise students' academic success it is essential that there is a strong partnership between students, their parents, and the School. Parents have a role to play in monitoring the home learning of their children, including in Year 11 and 12. This needs to be informed by appropriate and timely communication from teachers through the Learning Management Portal (SEQTA).

DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS

Homework is work or activities set by the class teacher. This might include tasks such as completing sets of problems or questions, making additional notes, tackling test style questions, researching ideas or topics or completing journal tasks. It could also include reading a textbook, reading a book for English, or reading over notes given by the teacher in a lesson. In essence, homework provides the student with the opportunity to consolidate classroom learning, to practise new skills, to deepen understanding, to explore and apply ideas further and to improve recall of learning.

Study is home or school based learning, which is not directed by the teacher. Study focuses on the review and consolidation of learning. Students need to be explicitly taught a range of skills to help them to become independent in their study habits.

Study Skills include skills such as time management, note taking, summarising, ways of improving memory and examination technique. At Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School, we believe it is essential for students to develop an effective, committed approach to home learning. This approach is developed in the formative years of Secondary School, enabling greater independence and self-direction as students move into Senior Secondary years. It is essential that students are taught how to prepare for tests and examinations, to research and write reports, to organise personal study time and to be effective in selecting appropriate techniques for study.

POLICY

In Years 7 to 9, teaching staff are expected to set meaningful home learning tasks (homework) that have clearly defined learning objectives, success criteria, and time frames for completion. Home learning tasks should be set on a regular basis and must include teacher directed activities that demonstrate various 'study techniques' suitable for the course and Learning Area. The School recognises the need for students to be taught how to study appropriately for the variety of courses studied. Subject teachers are required to build this into the curriculum to ensure that study skills are taught in context. Thus, there will be a particular emphasis on the teaching of study techniques in Year 7, 8 and 9 with examinations being both a mechanism to assess student learning and a way for students to practise study techniques and appreciate the outcome of good study habits.



It is not expected that students will be asked to 'study' as part of a home learning tasks in Years 7 to 9 without appropriate and detailed direction and guidance from the teacher.

A minimum of one piece of home learning should be set by each teacher in Mathematics, English, Science, Languages, and Humanities each week. In Arts, Technologies, and Health and Physical Education, a minimum of one home learning task should be set every two weeks on average. Teachers should ensure that the task is recorded in Home Study Diary by students. In addition, teachers are expected to provide details of each homework task to parents, through the planning section of SEQTA.

Long-term 'project style' tasks should not be set. If any task, linked to classroom learning, is of a longer nature, it should be broken down into smaller sub sets of work with interim dates provided to students to guide and structure their home learning. It is noted that, in Year 7 to 9, a little homework set frequently is better than a large amount set infrequently.

Home learning tasks should be checked regularly by teachers, where possible marked, and feedback provided to students.

When setting homework teachers should be mindful of external and school commitments, which may make home learning tasks difficult to complete over one night. Flexibility and individual negotiation would be expected between students and teacher in such instances.

Home Group Teachers, Year 7 House Teachers, and Parents support a student's home learning commitments by regularly checking the Home Study Diary, which is an important organisational tool for students. The Diary can be used for communication between home and school, and Parents and Home Group Teachers are asked to sign the Home Study Diary when it is checked, ideally on a weekly basis.

***In Year 10, 11 and 12*** there is an expectation that the set homework tasks in Year 7 to 9 have incorporated the range of study skills appropriate to the particular Learning Area or course. As a student moves into Year 10, it is therefore appropriate to expect students to be less reliant on teacher direction to fulfil their home learning requirements for the week. It is expected that teachers will continue to set homework tasks, but that some home learning time will be left unstructured for students to build their own study regime around the set work, using the skills developed in Year 7 to 9. This shift from teacher directed to student directed will be progressive and may occur at different rates for students. It would be expected that a student moving into Year 11 and 12 ATAR courses would have a strong level of independent study techniques well established.

### ***Home Learning Time Guide***

The following provides a guide for the time students can expect to spend on home learning tasks in any particular Year Group.

<b>Year 7</b>	6 hours per week
<b>Year 8</b>	6 to 8 Hours per week
<b>Year 9</b>	7 to 10 hours per week
<b>Year 10</b>	9 to 12 hours per week
<b>Year 11 and 12</b>	A minimum of 2.5 hours per ATAR course; and 30 minutes per General or Certificate course.

Students in Year 12 with six ATAR courses could expect to spend up to 18 hours per week on Home Learning.

Home Learning activities should be spread over the week. As a student moves from Year 7 to Year 12 it will become impossible to avoid completing home learning tasks on the weekend, so students should start to get used to this from Year 7. For example, if a Year 7 student completed one hour of home learning each of Monday to Thursday nights, there would still be two hours to do over Friday night, Saturday, or Sunday, to make up the required six hours. New Secondary students, especially all Year 7 students, should build up to the required hours as rapidly as possible, acknowledging that some students will take longer to do this than others.



## GUIDELINES FOR HOME LEARNING

Effective time management is highly likely to lead to academic success. Students are encouraged to produce a home-learning timetable, record it onto the template provided in the Home Study Diary, and share it with their Home Group teacher at the beginning of each year and again later in the year. It is recognised that some students may find alternative routines for their home learning, such as working in shorter bursts or in longer blocks for older students. Students are encouraged to become aware of their own home learning routine, to understand their own personal working habits and to become more personally responsible for managing their home learning time. This should assist students in becoming independent learners.

A home learning timetable covers all seven days of the week and shows all of the student's commitments. Generally, academic work should be marked on the timetable in 45 minute blocks, each followed by a ten-minute break, ensuring that the total time for the blocks of work adds up to the required times mentioned previously. These blocks of time should be allocated each day to fit around the student's interests and commitments. Once the home learning timetable has been adjusted to fit the requirements for a particular student, it must be strictly adhered to, so that working at those times becomes a habit. During a 45-minute work block, the student should be fully focused, and work intensively and actively, with no distractions from music, television or other people. It is recommended that distractions such as mobile phones should be left with parents during study time. Some student may find a shorter block of time to be more effective. A student may prefer to work in 30-minute blocks with a shorter break in between and then change activities to enable focus to be maintained. The key is for a student to determine their most effective home learning pattern, and once established to stick to it so it becomes a routine.

## GUIDELINES FOR STUDY SKILLS

The School recommends that students use weekly summaries of the content covered in courses to support learning. This assists students when preparing for examinations and tests. Methods of summarising work and techniques for improving memory and recall of academic work will form a basis of the suite of study skills that are developed with students in Years 7 to 9.

Students also need to learn how to apply learning in novel situations, and use techniques, taught in class, to structure thinking. These routines come from the Harvard University's 'Making Thinking Visible' and 'Cultures of Thinking' Programs. Students may use digital tools to consolidate and review learning such as Mathletics, Mangahigh, and Education Perfect.

## EXAMINATION PREPARATION

This is an important part of the program in all areas of the curriculum, starting in Year 7 and continuing through to Year 12. Practise with past examination questions, under examination conditions, should be part of this and should be set as homework. Such practice questions would require feedback from each teacher to his or her students. The School Policy 'Examinations and Preparation for Examinations' should be consulted, for further specific information on examinations

HEAD OF SCHOOL

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